

PETER WELCH
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CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4500

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April 28, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

Please see the following information about a project to be considered for the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2023. The following project has community support and will be an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars.

Project Applicant: Town of Bennington

Project Name: Bennington's Fair Food Initiative: Building an inclusive, fair food system for all

Project Location: 205 South Street Bennington, Vermont 05201

Project County: Bennington

Requested Amount: HUD/EDI

Account: \$ 2,200,000

Project Explanation: The Town of Bennington seeks funding to support a food distribution hub that will serve Bennington's expanding food system and be a catalyst for workforce development and job training, economic development and business growth, a vibrant local food scene, multi-sector employment opportunities, improved food access for better health, and a decreasing carbon footprint.

BFFI seeks funding to:

- Incubate/accelerate area farm and food business' ability to supply adequate product to a community food hub, which will expand their markets and bottom line
- Support Bennington Community Market's ability to offer equitable food sales, efficient distribution and effective consumer education projects;
- Develop a Vocational Education Lab at Southwest Tech Center for working lands, food service and hospitality workforce development;
- Develop online training, food systems curriculum, and a farmer training pilot; and
- Launch and staff a Leadership Office that will oversee this work

An inclusive, fair food system in Bennington will grow the local economy, create workforce options for residents, attract new, diverse groups and people to Vermont through farmer and food system training and jobs, improve public health outcomes for Bennington region's at risk population and act as an agricultural tourism magnet for the area. BFFI's focus on inclusivity is a guiding value of the initiative. An inclusive, fair food system will also improve community health outcomes & regenerate working lands. By powering this food system through solar energy, Bennington will be a beacon of ecological excellence through its food system practices.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Welch", with a large, stylized initial "P".

Peter Welch
Member of Congress